

FOREST FRAGMENTATION

Forest fragmentation is the conversion of large, contiguous areas of forest into relatively small patches of forest and non-forest in ways that reduce or eliminate the ability of the forest to provide ecological, economic, and social benefits. The factors contributing to forest fragmentation are widespread, making it important to consider multiple sides of this issue.

Some Reasons to Plan for Forest Continuity

- A clear plan for preserving forest continuity will prevent haphazard development, which fragments forests and disrupts the health of forest ecosystems.
- More people are purchasing forestlands for home sites, which means an increased threat of forest fragmentation through the establishment of residential infrastructure such as roads and utilities.
- Development from urban areas is encroaching into forested areas, which can affect forest management practices and the ecology of forest ecosystems.
- Large, contiguous areas of forest provide scenic landscapes and corridors for wildlife habitat, and are less susceptible to diseases than smaller blocks of forest.

Tools to Address Forest Fragmentation Across All Elements of Your Comprehensive Plan

- Use available forestry data and maps to assess forests and the role they play in your community.
- As a goal of your community's plan, make maintaining and enhancing forest continuity a priority.
- The Managed Forest Law Program has the potential to sustain large blocks of forestland in Wisconsin. The program offers reduced annual property taxes to forest landowners who own at least 10 acres of forest by deferring a portion of the balance until harvest of the forest under a forest management plan.
- Work with local organizations to acquire development rights on important forestland, such as through the use of conservation easements, transfers, or purchases.



For more planning tools go to the
**Smart Forestry for Smart Growth
Planner's Toolbox**

on the web at

<http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/SmartForestry/toolbox/>

